

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

SENIOR EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE BRIEF
10 October 2001
PASS SEIB 01-236CHX

Malaysia: Islamic Opposition Denouncing US [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Leaders of the fundamentalist Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) are displaying an anti-US stance, counter to the party's longstanding efforts to convince the US of its pragmatism. Party leaders this week called the strikes on Afghanistan "an act of terrorism" and the US a "war criminal" and said Washington is targeting Muslims instead of terrorists. PAS officials condemned the 11 September attacks on the US but said the US bore responsibility for them.

-- [REDACTED] PAS president Fadzil Noor, a member of the party's moderate wing, sent [REDACTED] an "offensive" condolence letter after the 11 September attacks. [REDACTED]

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

PAS is holding demonstrations at the US and British Embassies this Friday but probably will not provoke violence. The party has a strong incentive to appear committed to the democratic process and to avoid giving Prime Minister Mahathir's government an opportunity to portray it as extremist.

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-- Fadzil Noor has told reporters that the government "will attack" the PAS if it stages antiwar protests. Other PAS demonstrations have been peaceful and small, with only 75 at last week's gathering, [REDACTED]

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(b)(1)

Soft popular support for US action limits Mahathir's ability to back Washington publicly. [REDACTED]

(b)(1)

-- Muslims make up about 60 percent of the population, and many of them are saying the US got its comeuppance for supporting Israel, [REDACTED]

(b)(1)

-- Ethnic Chinese are another quarter of the population and most of them oppose retaliatory strikes, [REDACTED]

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